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## **Best Steps to Home Safety**

**Is your home as safe as it could be?** Children and seniors are most vulnerable to in-home mishaps. But we can all use these reminders to prevent common home injuries.

**1 Don't take a fall.** Install grab bars in the tub or shower. Keep stairs well-lit and use handrails. Use a ladder, not furniture, to reach high areas. Wandering toddlers? Install a gate at the top and bottom of stairs.

**2 Prevent poisonings.** Children are most at risk, so practice kid safety: Lock up cleaners, medications and other potentially dangerous items; leave household products and drugs in original containers. Use child-resistant lids when provided. Post the Poison Control Center number (800-222-1222).

**3 Don't get burned.** Two easy ways to stop in-home fires: Don't leave cooking unattended, and maintain smoke alarms on all floors of your home. Keep fire extinguishers handy. Give space heaters at least 3 feet of space and turn them off when you sleep or leave the space.

**4 Remove choking and suffocation hazards.** Keep objects that can fit in a toilet paper tube out of children's reach. Have babies sleep on their backs. Keep soft objects out of cribs, and window cords out of reach.

**5 Don't leave children unattended around water.** This includes bathtubs, toilets, and pools. Empty buckets and wading pools after use and store upside down. Children should always swim with an adult; no one should swim alone – ever.

[Cutline]

**Make home a sanctuary, not a danger zone.**

Sources:

"Home Safety Fact Sheet." Home Safety Council, 2009. Accessed on 1/23/09 at [http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/state\\_of\\_home\\_safety/sohs\\_factsheet\\_w001.aspx/](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/state_of_home_safety/sohs_factsheet_w001.aspx/).

"Estimating the Costs of Unintentional Injuries, 2006." National Safety Council, 2006. Accessed on 1/23/09 at <http://www.nsc.org/resources/issues/estcost.aspx>.

## **BEST BITS**

**Test your fitness:** The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports offers a test for adults to gauge aerobic fitness, strength and flexibility. It involves a few timed exercises. You plug in your results – along with some basic statistics such as height and weight – to get a personal assessment, plus tips on how to improve your overall fitness. Visit

www.adultfitnessstest.org. *Note:* Get your provider's okay before taking the test if you have a chronic condition or do not exercise regularly.

Source:  
*Top Health* 10.08

**If you know that a child has been abused, neglected or exploited,** contact your local law enforcement and/or child protective services agency immediately. The National Child Abuse Hotline operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day at 800-422-4453.

Source: *Top Safety* 4.09

**Potassium helps maintain healthy blood pressure.** Health experts recommend consuming 4.7 grams of potassium every day in addition to the usual advice to cut salt, especially for people with high BP levels. Eat potassium-rich foods each day, such as potatoes, fortified milk products, bananas, and fortified orange juice. Get your provider's okay before taking a potassium supplement; discuss any medical conditions that may be affected by an increase in potassium.

Source:  
"Cutting salt isn't the only way to reduce blood pressure." Loyola Medicine, 1/26/09. Accessed on 1/27/09 at  
[http://www.loyolamedicine.org/News/news\\_Releases/news\\_release\\_detail.cfm?var\\_news\\_release\\_id=973440913](http://www.loyolamedicine.org/News/news_Releases/news_release_detail.cfm?var_news_release_id=973440913).

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SPECIAL REPORT

## **Preventing Childhood Obesity**

**Our children are burning fewer calories and consuming more calorie-dense foods than ever before.** The result is an epidemic of childhood obesity in the U.S. The number of overweight and obese\* children is more than 3 times higher than in the 1970s.

In response, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has developed resources and tips to prevent or reduce childhood obesity.

### **Dietary Steps**

**Limit sweetened beverages.** Regular soft drinks, sports and energy drinks, and fruit juices are loaded with calories and sugar. Encourage the habit of drinking water. Research indicates that children who are offered water have fewer weight problems than those who habitually consume regular soft drinks.

*Tip:* An occasional sweet beverage is fine, preferably sugar-free soft drinks and fruit juice without added sugar.

**Serve healthful foods.** From age 2 boys and girls need at least 2 cups of fruits and

vegetables each day; quantity goes up with age to 6 ½ cups for boys, and 5 cups for girls depending on activity level. If your kids resist these foods be patient – children may be exposed to a new food 10 times or more before they eat it.

*Tip:* Studies show kids consume more fruits, vegetables and calcium-rich foods when families eat meals together.

**Begin with breakfast.** Children who eat a healthy breakfast perform better in school. They're also less likely to overeat later or fill up on low-nutrient snack food.

*Tip:* Healthful snacks can add important nutrients and energy. Try low-fat chocolate milk, string cheese, grapes, baby carrots, trail mix and whole-grain muffins or crackers.

**Watch portion sizes.** Parents are responsible for providing appropriate amounts of healthful foods. But it's hard to know how much food a growing child needs or should eat. Children will eventually recognize for themselves when they're hungry and when they've had enough – just be sure they aren't choosing low-nutrition foods over essential ones.

*Tip:* Food portions for kids ages 6-11 are described in lively graphics at [MyPyramid.gov/kids/](http://MyPyramid.gov/kids/).

## Activity Steps

**Help kids get at least 60 minutes of daily moderate- or vigorous-intensity physical activity.** Promote activities at least 3 days a week to strengthen the heart, muscles and bones and promote a healthy muscle-to-fat ratio.

*Tip:* Limit screen time – watching TV and playing video and computer games – to less than 2 hours a day.

## Do kids outgrow excess fat?

Don't assume "baby fat" will go away. Measure your child's height, weight and body mass index at every provider visit, and plot it on a growth curve. **Overweight children are more likely to become obese adults.** At a young age, heavy kids may develop adult ailments, such as type 2 diabetes, liver problems, high blood pressure and unhealthy cholesterol. Staying obese as adults raises lifetime risk for arthritis, sleep apnea, esophageal reflux disease, gallstones, cancer and heart disease.

\*Overweight = BMI 25.0-29.9; obese = BMI 30.0-39.9

More Info: View "Helping Your Overweight Child," a pamphlet from the Weight-Control Information Network, at [http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over\\_child.htm](http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over_child.htm).

Sources:

"Helping your overweight child." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease, 1/08, accessed 1/29/09 at [http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over\\_child.htm](http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over_child.htm).

Goutham Rao, MD. Childhood obesity: "Highlights of AMA expert committee recommendations." American Family Physician 78 (2008): 56-63.

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## FITNESS GUIDELINES

### *Running for Fitness*

**Pounding the pavement for miles**, some runners or joggers make it look easy. But if you don’t know the right way to do it, the results can set you back – sore feet, shin splints, knee pain or worse. Start smart and avoid the troubles.

**STEP 1:** Check with your provider to determine if running is a reasonable activity for you.

*Note:* It’s not generally a good exercise for those who have orthopedic (back, knee, foot) or heart problems or are more than 20% overweight.

**STEP 2:** Suit up in comfortable attire. Invest in quality running shoes that reduce impact.

**STEP 3:** Choose a dirt trail or asphalt running surface, preferably not concrete. Try to choose safe surroundings.

**STEP 4:** Gradually increase time and intensity based on your personal strengths – and what feels comfortable.

**STEP 5:** Follow the **Training Basics** (below) from the American Council on Exercise.

**Running, love it or loathe it**, give it a chance by allowing your heart and entire body to adapt to the challenge slowly.

### **Training Basics for Beginning Runners**

**Start with 3 sessions per week.**

WEEK	TIME*	INTENSITY**
1	20	walk, moderate pace
2	22	walk, moderate to brisk pace
3	22	jog 30-45 sec, walk 5 min (3x)
4	24	jog 45-60 sec, walk 5 min (3x)
5	24	jog 30-45 sec, walk 4 min (4x)
6	26	jog 45-60 sec, walk 4 min (4x)
7	26	jog 30-45 sec, walk 3 min (5x)
8	28	jog 45-60 sec, walk 3 min (5x)
9	28	jog 30-45 sec, walk 2 min (6x)
10	30	jog 45-60 sec, walk 2 min (6x)
11	30	jog 2 min, walk 1 min (6x)
12+	30	progress gradually to continuous jogging

\*Total time includes 3-minute warm-up and 3-minute cool-down.

\*\*Individuals who are in good shape and have their provider's OK may progress at a faster rate.

Source: American Council on Exercise (acefitness.org)



[Cutline]

**Running is a fast track to fitness. Be sure you get off on the right foot.**

Sources:

"Ready to Run?" Fit Facts, American Council on Exercise, 2009. Accessed 2/14/09 at [http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/pdfs/fitfacts/itemid\\_2580.pdf](http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/pdfs/fitfacts/itemid_2580.pdf)

"Running a Marathon: Training Tips." UCSF Medical, 2002-08. Accessed 2/14/09 at [http://www.ucsfhealth.org/adult/medical\\_services/ortho/sports\\_medicine/marathonTips.html](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/adult/medical_services/ortho/sports_medicine/marathonTips.html)

"Running." Diet Detective, Integrated Wellness Solutions. Accessed 7/29/08 at [http://www.dietdetective.com/weightloss/basics.do?loc=running\\_basics\\_index.html](http://www.dietdetective.com/weightloss/basics.do?loc=running_basics_index.html)

## 6 Unexpected Ways to Gain Weight

**Losing weight is a challenge for many people.** For some, it's not as simple as diet and exercise. If you've tried to lose weight without success, you may need to think outside of the box. Let's explore 6 factors that may be adding weight or hindering your weight loss:

**1 Lack of sleep.** Research suggests sleep deprivation can affect hormones that control appetite. A good night's rest can also give you the energy needed for a healthy, active lifestyle.

**2 Peers.** In 2007, the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that people with obese friends may not perceive excess weight as a problem and were nearly 57% more likely to become obese. On the other hand, friends are the best motivators: Team up to reach your goals together.

**3 Stress.** Stress triggers the release of cortisol, which may increase appetite that can lead to weight gain and trouble losing weight. In addition, stress can cause fatigue, which may cause you to eat more.

**4 Prescription drugs.** Some medications may increase appetite and slow metabolism. Ask your provider if weight gain could be a side effect of any medications you are taking.

**5 Undiagnosed medical conditions.** The most common disease associated with weight gain is hypothyroidism, resulting from a deficiency of the thyroid hormone. This condition may lower metabolism.

**6 Location, location.** The CDC suggests where you live may affect your weight. Obesity rates are higher in communities with few sidewalks or bike lanes, a lack of gyms or recreational centers, and plenty of fast food restaurants.

These are factors to keep in mind when gaining weight control.

Sources:

"Other Factors in Weight Gain." CDC, 6/20/08. Accessed on 2/3/09 at [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/calories/other\\_factors.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/calories/other_factors.html).

"Weight Gain Linked to Lack of Sleep." Meridian Health, 6/2008. Accessed on 2/3/09 at <http://www.meridianhealth.com/index.cfm/NewsAndMedia/HealthNews/MindBody/2008jun.cfm>.

"The Spread of Obesity in Large Social Network over 32 Years." The New England Journal of Medicine, 6/26/07. Accessed on 2/3/09 at <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/357/4/370>.

"Stress Weight Gain." Stanford Wellsphere. Accessed on 2/3/09 at <http://Stanford.wellsphere.com/weight-loss-article/stress-weight-gain/7762>.

**Goal Line: Vacation? Pack portable workout gear: swimsuit, walking shoes and resistance bands.**

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MENTAL WELLBEING

## **When *Saying No* Saves Stress**

**After meeting needs of family and work**, are you failing to address your own needs? Men and women alike are spending more hours on work, domestic needs, and raising kids than 20 years ago, according to the Families and Work Institute.

You may be very capable and organized. But continually scrambling to do and have it all is a prescription for stress and disappointment. Here's why *yes* isn't always the best answer:

- **Saying yes doesn't make sense when you lack time**, or are stressed. What happens when you get sick, tired and irritable? That won't benefit you or anybody.
- **If you don't feel okay about saying yes, that's a red flag** that your commitment may become a problem for you.
- **Saying yes to avoid feeling guilty?** No need to feel guilty if you've done nothing wrong, or if you need to take care of yourself first.
- **When saying yes leaves you over-committed**, you may stress about not doing a good job – and you probably won't if you're short on time.
- **Saying yes too much won't get you to a simpler life** – one that minimizes activities and possessions that add clutter, create demands and cause stress.
- **Learn to rely on others to say yes.** Maybe you can do it better, but you don't need to do it all.

**HOW TO SAY NO:** *No. Can't do it. Not this time.* Be truthful – people will understand and respect your decision. Saying no might take practice but you may be amazed how much less

stressful life is when you learn to do it.

[Cutline]

**Value your time or nobody else will.**

**Manage your time or somebody else might.**

**Juggling too many responsibilities can keep you from having quality time to enjoy life more fully.**

Sources:

Ellen Galinsky, "Navigating Work and Family." Families and Work Institute, 2002, p 28-29.

"Managing Time Say "No" to Demands." Oak Forest Managing, 11/27/08. Acc. 2/13/09 at <http://www.iaff-affilocal3039.com/managing/managing-time-say-no-to-demands/>

"Learning to Say No." Mayo Clinic Women's Healthsource, 7/08, p 7; MayoClinic.com. Acc. 2/17/09 at <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress-relief/SR00039>

## **MIND Your Mental Health**

### **Signs of Depression**

**Depression is a major cause of disability in our nation**, more so now as people are especially stressed about their future. Negative emotions can chip away at your resilience, health and ability to cope with changes. Without relief, prolonged melancholy can lead to depression.

#### **Check yourself for these signs of depression:**

- ☐ Sadness most of the time (often for no apparent reason)
- ☐ Ongoing fatigue
- ☐ Withdrawal from social activities
- ☐ Inability to enjoy things you used to enjoy
- ☐ Unexplained weight loss or gain
- ☐ Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping more or insomnia)
- ☐ Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- ☐ Ongoing irritability, anger or anxiety
- ☐ Thoughts of suicide

Checking one or more of these symptoms may indicate you need professional help. If you have thoughts of suicide, see your health care provider right away. Nearly 80% of people who seek treatment enjoy better health. Work with your provider to find the best options for you.

**Your emotional health deserves daily attention.** Take time to think about your feelings or persistent worries that may be robbing you of sleep and peace of mind. These

habits may help restore your emotional well-being:

- Record your emotional highs and lows in a journal.
- Set achievable goals that give you confidence in the future.
- Stay in touch with people you enjoy.
- Relax, meditate, and get out and enjoy nature.

Psychologist Les Hutchinson encourages us to maintain a long-term perspective – life is full of change, and everybody faces positive and negative circumstances. They make up the natural, often difficult and unpredictable, ebb and flow of life.

Sources:

"Mental Health and Substance Abuse." World Health Organization, 8/18/06. Accessed on 1/29/09 at [http://www.searo.who.int/en/Section1174/Section1199/Section1567/Section1826\\_8098.htm](http://www.searo.who.int/en/Section1174/Section1199/Section1567/Section1826_8098.htm).

"Depression." National Institute of Mental Health, 8/2/07. Accessed on 1/28/09 at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/depressionmenu.cfm>.

"Depression (major depression)." MayoClinic.com, 2/14/08. Accessed on 1/22/08 at <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/depression/DS00175>.

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SELF CARE

## Not Just For Women: Osteoporosis

**Bone loss, or *osteoporosis***, is a silent disease that is very common in older women. But it also affects 2 million American men, and 12 million more are at risk.

If you're a guy, take a few minutes to see if your bones are at risk. Factors include:

- ☐ I am under weight.
- ☐ I have recently lost more than 10% of my weight.
- ☐ I smoke.
- ☐ I drink more than 2 alcoholic drinks a day.
- ☐ I may not get enough calcium and vitamin D.
- ☐ I do not get regular physical activity (30 minutes a day).
- ☐ I have low levels of testosterone.
- ☐ I use medications such as steroids, anticonvulsants or some cancer drugs.
- ☐ I have a family history of osteoporosis.

**Even if you have few of the risks listed above, take bone health seriously now.**

Discuss risk factors and bone density testing with your provider, especially if you are older than 50 (bone loss increases with age).

**Get enough calcium and vitamin D.** Before age 50 men need 1,000mg of calcium and 400-800 IU of vitamin D daily. Men age 50+ need 1,200mg of calcium and 800-1,000 IU of vitamin D. Best sources are food; before taking supplements, talk with your provider.



**Get moving.** Weight-bearing physical activity, such as walking, basketball and lifting weights, help strengthen muscles and bones.

**If you smoke, quit.** Smoking accelerates bone loss. And drink alcohol in moderation, if at all.

**FOR WOMEN ONLY:** Bone loss can begin in a woman's 20s or 30s, so meet with your provider to identify any personal risks for osteoporosis you can offset now.

Sources:

"Osteoporosis in Men." NIAMS/NIH, 8/08. Accessed 1/21/09 at [http://www.niams.nih.gov/Health\\_Info/Bone/Osteoporosis/men.asp](http://www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Bone/Osteoporosis/men.asp).

"Osteoporosis: Men." NOF, 2009. Accessed 1/21/09 at <http://www.nof.org/men/index.htm>.

"New Guidelines for Osteoporosis in Men." WedMD, 5/8/08. Accessed 1/21/09 at <http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/news/20080507/new-guidelines-for-osteoporosis-in-men>.

## **Hands-On *Relief***

**Spa massage is a popular and delightful form of relaxation.** Massage therapy can also help alleviate pain and stress, and ease symptoms of some conditions.

During a massage, the therapist manipulates muscles, skin and tendons. There are many types of massage and they usually take 60-90 minutes. The American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) lists the 4 most common as:

**Swedish** – relaxes and energizes

**Deep tissue** – treats damaged muscle

**Sports** – maintains flexibility to help prevent or heal athletic injuries

**Chair** – upper body massage in a special chair to reduce tension

**While massage isn't a substitute for medical care,** research suggests several possible benefits of massage:

- **Relieves pain** of fibromyalgia, migraines, surgery, and childbirth labor.
- **Soothes sore muscles** after physical activity or sports.
- **Eases withdrawal symptoms** in people trying to quit tobacco or alcohol.
- **Boosts immunity.**
- **Reduces stress** and depression.

**Massage isn't for every body.** Always consult your provider before getting any type of massage if you:

- are pregnant.
- have recently had a heart attack.

- have burns, cancer, arthritis, open wounds or skin problems.
- have deep vein thrombosis, severe osteoporosis, or unhealed fractures.

**To find a certified massage therapist**, ask your provider for a referral, or visit the AMTA's locator service at [www.amtamassage.org/findamassage/locator.aspx](http://www.amtamassage.org/findamassage/locator.aspx).

Sources:

"Massage: A relaxing method to relieve stress and pain." Mayo Clinic, 1/1/08. Accessed 1/21/09 at <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/massage/SA00082>.

"Choosing a type of Massage." AMTA, 2009. Accessed 1/21/09 at [http://www.amtamassage.org/findamassage/massage\\_type.html](http://www.amtamassage.org/findamassage/massage_type.html).

**Goal Line: Quit smoking trick: Wear a rubber band around your wrist and snap it when you get cravings (yes, they say it helps).**

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## SAFETY SOLUTIONS

### Stay Connected With Care

**Online safety isn't just for kids.**

**The buzzword for 21st century technology is *mobility*.** The Pew Internet and American Life Project predicts that by 2020, most people worldwide will use mobile devices— cell phones, smart phones and other devices— as their main access to the Web and email.

As we join the ranks of mobile users, we need to be vigilant about hazards such as spam, cyber bullies, predators, and identity thieves.

Email – **Protect your privacy.** Never send personal details such as age, name and Social Security number or financial information. Banks and governments never ask for this information in an email. Use age- and gender-neutral email addresses and screen names. Never open messages or download attachments from strangers; use filters to block unwanted email.

Shopping online – **Buy only from trusted and secure retailers.** Look for https:// in the website address – the "s" stands for secure. Look for a return policy, complete contact information and help features, including an 800 number.

Socializing online – **Follow precautions noted above** when using chat rooms, instant messaging and social networking sites (SNS). Keep an eye on kids' activities and discuss precautions. Check your child's SNS profile regularly to ensure content and people viewing it are appropriate.

**And speaking of content ...** With a few keystrokes, everyone can now share short video

or pictures with the world. Make sure you don't reveal personal information, such as a house number, a person's name or inappropriate material.

[Outline]

**Take precautions to ensure safe and fun connecting to the Web world.**

Sources:

Andrew Trotter. "Mobile Devices Seen as Key to 21st-Century Learning." Education Week, 1/9/09. Accessed 1/15/09 at <http://www.edweek.org/dd/articles/2009/01/09/04mobile.h02.html>.

"Social Web Tips for Parents." ConnectSafely.org, 2009. Accessed 1/15/09 at [http://www.connectsafely.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=563&Itemid=95](http://www.connectsafely.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=563&Itemid=95).

"Protect your family from ID theft and wireless intrusion." ConnectSafely.org, 8/19/08. Accessed 1/15/09 at [http://www.connectsafely.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1268&Itemid=115](http://www.connectsafely.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1268&Itemid=115).

## **Safety Afloat**

**Ahoy, boaters, before you leave the dock:**

**Suit up with life jackets.** Everyone needs to wear them, crew and passengers – whether on a canoe, kayak, sailboat, or 50-foot yacht – even if you can swim like a fish. More than two-thirds of fatal boating incidents involve drownings; about 90% of those victims didn't wear a life jacket.

**Complete a boating education course.** Learning the safe operation and navigation of your boat will increase your pleasure of it.

**Have a Vessel Safety Check (VSC).** The Coast Guard Auxiliary will provide a free inspection of your boat's safety equipment and instruction in safety procedures. Visit <http://safetyseal.net/GetVSC/> to find a VSC examiner.

**Don't mix alcohol and boats.** More than a third of fatalities resulting from boating collisions involved alcohol. In other fatalities involving alcohol, more than half of victims capsized their boat or fell overboard.

**Learn more** about boating safety at the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators website: [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

Sources:

"Safe Boating Tips." National Safe Boating Council, 2009. Accessed 1/14/09 at [http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/resources/pdf/safe\\_boating\\_tips2008.pdf](http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/resources/pdf/safe_boating_tips2008.pdf).

"Gear up for boating safety." Family Safety & Health, Summer 2005: 7.

## Food Poisoning

### Can you pass the test?

**We share the globe with invisible microbes**, many of them in the food we eat. Some of them can make us sick, causing little more than uncomfortable gastric symptoms for a couple days; others can cause serious illness.

Test your knowledge about safe food handling. *Key:* “Raw” refers to meats, seafood, poultry and eggs which require special care and cooking.

1. **True False** A maximum of 50°F is the proper refrigerator temperature.
2. **True False** The safest way to thaw frozen raw food is in the refrigerator.
3. **True False** After handling raw meat, poultry or fish, the best way to cleanse your hands is with a quick rinse in hot water.
4. **True False** Wood cutting boards are better than plastic surfaces for handling raw foods.
5. **True False** Place leftovers in shallow containers and refrigerate within 2 hours after cooking.

### ANSWERS

1. *False* – A temperature of 40°F or less is needed to slow most bacterial growth. Keep freezers at 0°F.
2. *True* – You can also thaw foods in the microwave if you will be cooking the food promptly.
3. *False* – Immediately after hand-ling raw foods wash your hands in hot water and soap for 20 seconds, then dry off with a fresh, clean towel.
4. *False* – Both can harbor bacteria, but wood absorbs more and is harder to clean. *Best:* Use a separate board for raw foods to avoid cross-contamination with ready-to-eat food.
5. *True* – Hot foods need quick refrigeration after cooking because cooling invites bacterial growth. *Tips:* Shallow containers cool or freeze food faster than deeper ones, and stop bacterial growth quicker. Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F before eating.

More Info: For fact sheets on safe food handling: <http://www.foodsafety.gov>

### Does food borne illness increase in warmer months?

**Yes**, bacteria grow and multiply faster in warm, humid temperatures. Eating outdoors? Chill prepared foods within 2 hours after cooking; transport them in a cooler. Seal raw foods securely and apart from ready-to-eat ones. Outdoors, keep your cooler in the shade.

Sources:

“Can Your Kitchen Pass the Food Safety Test?” USFDA, FDA Office of Public Affairs, 2002-07. Acc. 2/13 at [http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/895\\_kitchen.html](http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/895_kitchen.html)

"Foodborne Illness Peaks in Summer – Why? Fact Sheets, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, 7/7/06. Acc. 2/13/09 at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact\\_sheets/Foodborne\\_Illness\\_Peaks\\_in\\_Summer/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Foodborne_Illness_Peaks_in_Summer/index.asp)

"Foodborne Illness: What Consumers Need to Know." Fact Sheets, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, 4/3/06. Acc. 2/13/09 at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact\\_sheets/Foodborne\\_Illness\\_What\\_Consumers\\_Need\\_to\\_Know/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Foodborne_Illness_What_Consumers_Need_to_Know/index.asp)

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### **Grilled Eggplant Sandwiches**

1 medium eggplant, cut crosswise into 4 half-inch thick slices  
4 medium slices rustic Italian bread, half-inch thick  
Olive oil cooking spray

3 medium tomatoes, minced and drained  
2 tbsps shredded Parmesan cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste

1 Preheat grill to medium-high. Lightly salt eggplant and let stand 10 minutes.  
2 Place eggplant and bread slices on a heavy-duty baking sheet; lightly spray both sides with cooking oil spray  
3 Grill eggplant until golden and soft, 2-3 minutes per side. Grill bread about 1 minute per side. Return eggplant and bread to baking sheet.  
4 On each slice of bread layer an eggplant slice and equal portions of tomatoes and cheese.  
5 Place baking sheet on grill, close grill lid until sandwiches are hot and cheese is melted, about 5 minutes.

### **MAKES 4 (open) SANDWICHES:**

#### **PER SANDWICH:**

197 calories | 10g protein | 3.7g total fat | 41g carbs | 5g fiber | 397mg sodium

**Goal Line: Keep a close watch on food portions when Saturday rolls around – we typically eat more on weekends.**

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## QUICK STUDIES

**The suicide rate in the U.S. is increasing.** In a report by the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health's Center for Injury Research and Policy, between 1999 and 2005 the suicide rate increased by .7%. Middle-aged Caucasian women had the largest increase at

3.9%, followed by middle-aged Caucasian men with a 2.7% increase. *Note:* If you or someone you know has ongoing depression or thoughts of suicide, talk with your provider now.

Source:

"U.S. Suicide Rates on the Rise for Middle-Aged Adults" 10/21/08. HealthNews. Accessed on 11/21/08 at <http://www.healthnews.com/family-health/mental-health/us-suicide-rates-rise-middle-aged-adults-1980.html>.

**The American Heart Association reports** that due to medical advances, deaths from heart attacks decreased by 30.7% and stroke deaths decreased by 29.2% between 1999 and 2006 in the U.S. Yet, heart attack and stroke remain the top killers in the nation, accounting for 34.2% of the 2.4 million deaths reported in 2006. The best way to ward off heart disease and stroke is to practice healthy habits including: regular, moderate exercise (30 minutes most days); a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean sources of protein; and regular screening based on your provider's advice.

Sources:

"Deaths from Heart Disease, Stroke Down 30%." HealthDay news, 12/15/08. Accessed on 1/30/09 at [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_72821.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_72821.html).

## EXPERT ADVICE

### What are probiotics?

**Probiotics are food ingredients containing live microorganisms that have beneficial health effects.** Probiotics supply the live action required to start cultured or fermented foods such as yogurt, buttermilk, sour cream and raw sauerkraut.

**Benefits:** Eating foods containing probiotics helps replenish friendly bacteria in your digestive tract. Good bacteria help crowd out harmful germs. They may improve digestion, protect immunity, and help relieve irritable bowel syndrome and other intestinal conditions.

**Best sources:** For general health, the usual recommendation is 6-8 ounces of yogurt a day. You can also boost activity of helpful gut bacteria by slowly increasing your intake of soluble fiber; good sources include fruits, vegetables, beans, flaxseeds, oats and barley.

**Consult a provider before:** **1** Taking supplements, or **2** giving probiotics to infants, the elderly, or people with a chronic disorder or weak immune system.

*Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP*

Source: Probiotics." The Medical Letter, Volume 49, Issue 1267, 8/13/07: 66-68.

### How does caffeine disrupt sleep?

**Caffeine is a drug that** reduces the quality and length of sleep by inducing temporary alertness. It does this by increasing adrenaline and blocking chemicals in the brain. The stimulation can occur within minutes after consuming caffeine. But its effect on sleep can last for hours, depending on dose, individual sensitivity and time between use and

bedtime.

**Expert advice:** To avoid sleep disturbance don't consume caffeine 4-6 hours before bedtime and limit intake to 250mg daily. This is a typical amount in 3 8-ounce cups of coffee; 8 8-ounce diet colas; and 6 8-ounce cups of U.S. tea. Caffeine is also added to some over-the-counter medications, coffee-flavored desserts and non-cola drinks.

If you consume caffeine and have trouble sleeping, try cutting back. Also limit or avoid caffeine if you are prone to headaches, stomach ailments or nervousness. Pregnant women and nursing mothers should limit use, and young children should avoid it.

Sources:

"Caffeine and Sleep." National Sleep Foundation, 2009. Accessed 1/21/09 at [http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hulXKjM0IxF/b.4809555/k.B1E8/Caffeine\\_and\\_Sleep.htm](http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hulXKjM0IxF/b.4809555/k.B1E8/Caffeine_and_Sleep.htm).

"Information about caffeine dependence." Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, 7/9/03. Accessed 1/21/09 at [http://www.caffeinedependence.org/caffeine\\_dependence.html](http://www.caffeinedependence.org/caffeine_dependence.html).

"The Buzz on Caffeine and Sleep." National Sleep Foundation, 2009. Accessed 1/21/09 at [http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hulXKjM0IxF/b.2419103/k.DEFA/Caffeine\\_Calculator.htm](http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hulXKjM0IxF/b.2419103/k.DEFA/Caffeine_Calculator.htm).